

DOC TUITION REIMBURSEMENT PROGRAM

GUIDELINES

PURPOSE: To explain the general guidelines and administrative process of the Tuition Reimbursement Program (TRP) within the Indiana Department of Correction (DOC).

SCOPE: The TRP is available to all permanent, full-time employees of the DOC. Once the employee has completed his/her working test period and is granted permanent status, they are then eligible to apply for TRP participation. TRP is limited to accredited Indiana schools.

DESCRIPTION: The TRP is a state funded tuition reimbursement program for all permanent DOC employees (**new hires are not eligible until after their 6 months probationary period**). The program assists in defraying expenses individuals incur when taking educational courses on their own time. To qualify the educational course must benefit the employee with increased knowledge and/or skills that contribute to job performance and/or will prepare the employee for advancement within DOC. The TRP program does not guarantee any financial incentive for receiving a degree.

REPAYMENT AGREEMENT: Any employee wanting to participate in the TRP must sign a repayment agreement. This agreement states that after the completion of a class for which the employee was reimbursed by DOC, the employee agrees to continue employment with DOC for at least eighteen months after completion of the course. If the employee does not remain employed for the full 18 month period, they will be obligated to repay DOC for the class(es) on a prorated basis. If terminated for cause, the employee will be obligated to repay DOC for the class(es) on a prorated basis.

REIMBURSEMENT AMOUNTS: Upon successful completion of approved courses, DOC will reimburse **75%, not to exceed \$2,200.00 per fiscal year (July 1 through June 30)**, with a limit of 6 credit hours per semester. The reimbursement amount will cover the cost of tuition, and all associated fees, including parking fees. The cost of books, notebooks, and personal materials such as calculators, tablets and writing instruments will not be eligible for reimbursement. Calculations for reimbursement will be based on the amount of tuition **not** covered by any other source such as Pell Grant or other financial aid programs intended to support the employee's educational effort (student loans are not affected by this calculation).

APPLICATIONS: All applications must be submitted and approved by the Human Resources Division Director **no earlier** than 8 weeks before the course(s) begin and **no later** than 2 weeks prior to the start of the course(s). Any applications received outside this time frame will be returned to the employee.

Employees who wish to take a course should obtain the TRP packet (application, TRP Guidelines, and the Agreement for Repayment form) from their HR office. You must include a **course description** for each course you are taking.

After completing both forms, they must be given to your immediate supervisor for approval and signatures. Your supervisor must make a recommendation, provide comments, **sign and date** the application and **forward the application, the signed repayment agreement, and course description(s)** to the Human Resources Division E334.

DOC TRP Committee will approve or disapprove the application and notify the applicant directly in writing. If the application is approved, the applicant will receive a letter and a copy of the approved application.

****Please note:** If information on the application changes (i.e. course is canceled or applicant will be taking the course at a later date), it is the responsibility of the applicant to notify HRD. Some situations will require applicants to resubmit the application.

APPROVAL CRITERIA: The course being applied for must be of benefit to the department. Courses recognized will be limited to subjects directly related to an applicant's present or possible future assignments. The course must be taken on the employee's own time, outside working hours. Course loads must not be so heavy as to interfere with job performance. No more than six classroom hours per week will be approved. The course must be offered by a recognized and accredited institution or organization. Accredited Colleges, universities, and trade schools are permissible. Some correspondence schools may be approved on an individual basis. Judgments as to whether a course meets approval criteria will be made by HRD. Managers/Supervisors in the approval chain will not stop an application because they feel it does not meet the criteria. Courses must be approved by HRD prior to enrollment unless this requirement is waived by the TRP Committee.

FUNDING CONTSRAINTS: DOC has a fixed budget for TRP. Human Resources and fiscal audit staff will monitor the allocated funds during the fiscal year and the TRP Committee will approve requests based upon availability of funds. An unusually large number of requests may reduce the reimbursement amount. If funding problems develop, DOC may curtail the program at any time. Reimbursement for approved requests could be delayed if funds are not available at a given time.

REIMBURSEMENT PROCEDURES: If the course is completed with a satisfactory record or a grade of C or better for undergraduate courses, a grade of **B** or better for graduate courses. Upon completion, the individual **submits the proper documentation (an itemized account statement from the school, a copy of the canceled check – front and back, or credit card statement, and grade report) within 60 working days** of course completion for reimbursement. If no grade report is given, **on page 2 of the TRP Application, the Reimbursement Certificate area must be signed by authorized personnel from the institution that can confirm completion of the course.** All proper documentation should be submitted to Human Resources Division – Central Office E334.

Individuals who leave employment with the Department before completing the approved course(s) will not e eligible for reimbursement.

These guidelines supersede any previous guidelines including the employee handbook.

INDIANA DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTION
AGREEMENT FOR RECOUPING TUITION REIMBURSEMENT PAYMENTS

Agreement:

As a condition of receiving educational assistance, I agree to continue employment with the Indiana Department of Correction for at least eighteen (18) months after completion of _____ (name of course). In the event I voluntarily leave employment with DOC prior to the expiration of the eighteen month period for any reason, I will repay the amount of tuition reimbursement that I received for the above named course. The amount will be prorated by dividing the amount I received by eighteen (18) months and then multiplied by the number of months remaining in the period I agreed to remain employed.

I UNDERSTAND AND AGREE THAT NOTHING HEREIN SHALL BE CONSTRUED AS A CONTRACT OR PROMISE OF CONTINUED EMPLOYMENT, OR NEGATE, IF APPLICABLE, MY AT-WILL EMPLOYMENT STATUS.

Employee's Signature

Date

HR Director's Signature

Date